

**WOMEN'S HEALTH DAY PROCESS ACTION TEAM
12TH MEDICAL GROUP
RANDOLPH AFB TX**

The mission of the 12th Medical Group is to serve the health needs of the Randolph community, to support the flying mission, and to meet worldwide operational commitments.

Our key processes are:

- (1) Delivers Health Care
- (2) Supports Flying Training
- (3) Provides Qualified People for Operational Taskings

In early 1993, each Medical Treatment Facility (MTF) was required to prepare a plan to meet the Department of Defense (DOD) guidance on Women's Health Issues. Specifically, the DOD guidance, effective 1 July 93, required "all female beneficiaries 18 years old and older or who are sexually active should receive an annual health maintenance examination which includes, but is not limited to, the following services: 1) Papanicolaou smear; 2) pelvic examination; 3) breast examination; and, 4) blood pressure measurement. Family planning and contraceptive counseling will be made available for all eligible women who desire this service consistent with applicable DoD and Service regulations. The results of the Papanicolaou smear shall be provided within 14 days..."

THE DOD GUIDANCE FOR MAMMOGRAMS:

At the age of 40, a baseline mammogram shall be required for all active duty women and shall be offered to all other women who receive health care within the Military Health Services System. In addition, mammography shall be provided for women at any age who have been identified by their health care provider as requiring additional screening as indicated by individual risk factors. For women over the age of 50, a screening mammography is recommended annually. All mammogram must have a referral to ensure test results are tracked. Appointment times shall be within 4 weeks for baseline or screening mammogram. Results shall be made available to the patient within 14 days.

If evaluation by a health care provider requires mammography for diagnosis, e.g., for a lump, the test shall be provided within five working days of when it is ordered. Test results shall be available to the patient within five days of the test.

THE DOD GUIDANCE FOR GYNECOLOGY SERVICES:

The patient makes a judgment whether gynecology care is an emergency, urgent, or routine. Emergencies will be seen in an emergency room available 24 hours a day, urgent problems seen within one working day, and routine care shall be seen within four weeks or the woman advised and provided the option of going outside the medical treatment facility for care.

RANDOLPH Is APPROACH

We started with a Tiger Team and evolved into a Process Action Team (PAT). At first glance the Executive Committee members felt we simply did not have the resources to meet the

DOD guidance in the short turn-around-time they provided. An analysis by our Tiger revealed six major areas that were barriers to providing quality and availability of health care all beneficiaries. It discovered: 1) Pap smears sent to Wilford Hall Medical Center's (WHMC) cytology department consumed a large portion of our 14 day turn-around-time, 2) budgetary constraints precluded direct mailing or hiring more personnel, 3) we did not have a direct computer link to WHMC's cytology laboratory, 4) we did not have administrative support assigned to the OB/GYN Clinic, 5) our policy to have 25 slides in the transfer box prior to shipping significantly ate into our 14 day turn-around-time, and 6) transportation of specimen WHMC were infrequent.

Solutions to these barriers were achieved by our PAT using QAF tools such as flowchart brainstorming, cause-and-effect diagrams, interviews with workers at all levels, internal external customer surveys and questionnaires, and tapping into the experience and knowledge of our in-house medical experts, from technicians to doctors. The work of the team devised thirty five possible solutions and prioritized them. It continues to revisit possible solutions and implements them as equipment, resources, and money become available.

Our most innovative solution was the Women's Health Day. This event is held quarterly and targets women who traditionally have had limited access to women's health screening--retirees or their dependents. Many had not had Pap smears or mammograms for years. The WHD effectively leverages the efforts of our medical providers by extensively using volunteers. Since our first WHD, competition with active duty personnel for OB/GYN and mammogram appointments has been eliminated, relieving the "cut throat" frantic attempts to obtain appointments. Pleased with our success with the WHD, we decided to expand our access to men as well--voila our comprehensive health care wellness clinic for men, "Men's Health Day.. Both of these events have been a big hit at Randolph AFB.

Starting with a Tiger Team and transitioning to a PAT, all team members gained invaluable insight and experience with QAF tools and teamwork. The expertise developed by this team enabled the 12th Medical Group (12 MDG) to meet the DOD guidance where other MTFs have not. As importantly, the successes of the team are broadcast throughout the 12 MDG and the Wing, inspiring other process owners to form PATs. In the 12 MDG alone, the Commander has commissioned more than **five** additional PATs and most recently a PAT to look at PPIP--Put Prevention Into Practice. The Wing Commander, pleased with the WHD PAT's success, arranged for them to brief all squadron commanders at the April 1995 Expanded Wing Quality Council. The WHD PAT success story far exceeds merely having solved its assigned charter, it effectively promotes the use of PATs throughout the 12th Medical Group and 12th Flying Training Wing.

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